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ABSTRACT

The development of the Mainstream Curriculum Integration Model at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, designed to prepare regular educators to deal with handicapped children, is chronicled. Faculty is explained to have identified 10 content areas (including awareness and attitudes, litigation and legislation, and classroom and student behavior management) and to have delineated specific objectives within the clusters. Examples of ways in which the curriculum has been integrated into specific courses (such as Fundamentals of Development for Education) as well as the program for students in elementary education (including exposure to a mainstreamed setting in student teaching) and educational administration. Procedures for continuing the approach after termination of project funding are noted, as are efforts to monitor the program's effectiveness. (CL)

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PREPARING CLASSROOM TEACHERS TO WORK WITH MAINSTREAMED HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

A University's Approach to Integration of Curriculum at the Undergraduate Level

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On May 31, 1981 the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dean's Mainstream Grant Project will complete six years of programming funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. Dean's Grant Projects are accountable for developing and implementing preservice programs which prepare "regular" educators to work with handicapped children in the "mainstream."

The Mainstream Project, located in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Teachers College, has selected the curriculum integration approach for ensuring such preparation of its graduates. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Teachers College, consisting of seven administrative units and approximately 150 faculty, graduates approximately 700 teachers each year. The Mainstream Project has had significant impact upon the total teacher education program but has focused specifically on the preparation of elementary and secondary classroom teachers who will be responsible for serving handicapped children in their "regular" classrooms.

This paper describes the Mainstream Curriculum Integration Model developed and implemented in Teachers College at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Section One describes procedures and products related to model development and implementation. Included are discussions concerning: (1) mainstream curriculum identification; (2) faculty documentation of mainstream curriculum integration activity; (3) a course integration paradigm; and (4) documentation on student records of exposure to mainstream curriculum.

in the "least restrictive environment." Teachers College at UNL has, then, mainstreamed mainstreaming.

Following the selection of the curriculum integration approach, Project staff concentrated immediate efforts on awareness activities and the development and implementation of faculty support systems. A number of presentations and workshops were made available and ongoing formal and informal contacts provided faculty with technical assistance and relevant media and materials.

While it was necessary for some faculty to examine their own attitudes and acquire new knowledge about legislation and programming approaches regarding the education of the handicapped, it should be noted that there was widespread agreement among faculty that the knowledge and skills appropriate for teaching handicapped children in regular classrooms were essentially those necessary for teaching all children. Much of the curriculum appropriate for preparing teachers to teach the handicapped was, therefore, already in place in the existing Teachers College program. There was further agreement, however, that additional curriculum specific to handicapped legislation and programming should be carefully identified and integrated into the curriculum.

During the second three-year cycle of the Mainstream Project the major focus was on formalizing the curriculum integration model. While considerable mainstream instruction was occurring in a number of courses, a formal process for documenting and evaluating specific activities and experiences was not yet in place. It was determined that at least four major issues needed to be resolved if the curriculum integration process was to be effectively implemented and documented throughout Teachers College. A

discussion of the processes and products associated with resolution of those four issues follows.

Mainstream Curriculum Identification

The Mainstream Task Force, composed of Teachers College faculty, in conjunction with members of the Dean's Grant External Advisory Committee, identified ten major content areas as encompassing the information, knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that future teachers were prepared to teach mainstreamed handicapped students. The content areas are: (1) awareness and attitudes, (2) historical, philosophical, and social perspectives, (3) litigation and legislation, (4) service delivery systems and program approaches, (5) characteristics of children with handicapping conditions, (6) communication skills, role relationships and coordination of resources, (7) assessment in the classroom, (8) adaptation of curriculum and selection of instructional strategies, (9) classroom and student behavior management, and (10) development and implementation of the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Content areas one through four focus on the implications of state and federal legislation and the development of rationales for educating handicapped students in the least restrictive environment. Content area five is designed to increase future teachers' knowledge about the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of children with handicaps and the implications of these characteristics for teaching. Content area six focuses on professional roles and the need for collaboration in providing an individualized education. Consultation and adult-adult communication skills are included. Content areas seven and eight focus on learning theory and its application to children with special learning needs. Curriculum is

designed to acquaint future teachers with assessment and with instructional strategies which might be especially beneficial for children with specific handicapping conditions. Selection and adaptation of materials and curriculum-student match is included. Content area nine concentrates on preparing students to manage child and group behavior to produce effective learning environments. Content area ten focuses on the rationale underlying Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and procedures for their development and implementation. The roles of educators and parents in writing and implementing the IEP and the relationship of the IEP to daily classroom instruction are also addressed.

Faculty Documentation of Mainstream Curriculum Integration Activity

It was agreed that specific objectives which would further delineate the broader content areas or "clusters" should be written by those faculty who would be teaching the curriculum in their courses and practicum seminars. This approach, compared to the adoption of existing competencies or the writing of objectives by task forces and/or Project staff, was viewed as more likely to ensure faculty involvement and ongoing commitment and implementation.

With the idea of a separate mainstream course rejected as inconsistent with the mainstreaming philosophy and with the writing of objectives a faculty function, it was necessary to establish a procedure for documenting the curriculum as it was being taught in each course. In response to this need, the Instructional Unit Outline form (IUO) was developed. The IUO provides information about course objectives, learning activities and materials, and methods of student evaluation.

Instructional Unit Outlines were initially completed by Teachers College faculty during the first semester of 1978-79. Formalized instruction using

the IUOs began during the second semester of that year. Procedures for completing the IUOs varied somewhat according to the requests of the various Teachers College units. In some instances Project staff served as consultants as they met individually or in small groups with faculty. Some faculty requested workshops designed to include content which they would be teaching in designated courses. Faculty in one department completed individual IUOs for each course with Project staff then synthesizing the objectives into a master list reflecting curriculum taught in the entire department.

While standardized instructional modules for use by faculty are not uniformly incorporated, requests by some Teachers College units resulted in the development of "packets" which consist of objective statements accompanied by descriptions of activities and suggested materials which can be used selectively by faculty. These packets provide some structure for teaching to the curriculum content areas while preserving flexibility and the right of faculty to determine how they wish to teach mainstream curriculum.

The Integration Paradigm

Mainstream curriculum integration is presently focused in the undergraduate program. Teachers College units most extensively involved are Educational Psychology and Social Foundations (EPSF) in which three core courses occur and Curriculum and Instruction (C & I) which includes methods classes and practicum seminars in elementary and secondary education. Designated curriculum is introduced in the three core EPSF courses taken during the freshman and sophomore years, with knowledge and skills further developed and applied to subject areas throughout methods courses and student teaching seminars completed during the junior and senior years.

All students in Teachers College are exposed to the mainstream curriculum as integrated in the three core Educational Psychology and Social Foundations courses. As students focus on their major area of study, they receive methods instruction within different Teachers College units. There is, consequently, some variation in the way methods-level mainstream curriculum is presented.

Elementary education majors and secondary education students majoring in math, science, language arts, social studies, art and music receive methods instruction in the Center for Curriculum and Instruction where mainstream content is systematically integrated by faculty in the respective methods classes. In addition, elementary education majors and secondary education students majoring in the areas listed above complete respective curriculum-oriented classes which incorporate content related to all equity areas, including education of the handicapped.

Students majoring in physical education (elementary, secondary or K-12) and those secondary majors in business and vocational education receive their methods instruction from faculty in the units of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and the Center for Business and Vocational Education, respectively. While all methods courses in these units integrate some mainstream curriculum, majors are also required to take courses in adaptive physical education or special vocational needs. Such courses naturally focus on developing in the future teacher those skills necessary for teaching handicapped children in their respective specialty.

Another variation in training concerns special education (dual) majors who complete 29 hours of courses and practicum in the Department of Special Education in addition to their elementary or secondary education program.

These students graduate with dual endorsements in regular and special education.

Documentation on Student Records of Exposure to Mainstream Curriculum

Since mainstream curriculum is integrated into existing courses, the transcripts of most students graduating from Teachers College will not include an official course pertaining to teaching handicapped children in the regular classroom. (Exceptions as dicussed above include physical education and business and vocational education majors.)

In order to document the student's exposure to the integrated mainstream curriculum, a letter, signed by UNL's certification official, accompanies all institutional recommendations for certification. That letter confirms the student's completion of UNL's integrated program which includes the information, knowledge and skills necessary for teaching handicapped students in regular classrooms. The letter is also inserted in each graduate's credentials filed in the Teacher Placement Office so that all prospective employers are aware of the graduate's preparation. These procedures ensure that both state certification officers and prospective employers see official documentation which confirms and describes the UNL graduates' preparation for teaching the handicapped.

Section Two

EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING CURRICULUM

A major function of Mainstream Project staff has been to consult with faculty regarding the human and material resources needed to effectively integrate the identified curriculum. Extensive collaboration with faculty has occurred as relevant materials and media are previewed, purchased and/or developed. Identification of instructional strategies and team teaching of mainstream curriculum have been ongoing activities as support systems are developed and implemented. In addition to these continuing resource and consulting functions, Project staff respond to specific requests as individual faculty and/or units identify integration approaches which meet their special needs. The promotion of collaboration among faculty in regular and special education has been viewed as critical as curriculum is developed and integration strategies employed. The building of positive relationships and emphasis on cooperation among these faculties not only enhances the quality of the mainstream curriculum, but also provides a model for future teachers which illustrates the importance of collaboration among all educators involved in mainstreaming.

History and Philosophy of Education (Freshman Year)

Following the conclusion of the first year of formalized mainstream curriculum integration, faculty expressed concern that there was a great deal of variability in the content being presented in the 12 different sections of this freshmen foundations course. This resulted in part from variability in faculty awareness and expertise. As a result, faculty and Project staff collaborated in the development of a curriculum "packet." The curriculum packet, which was completed for Fall 1980 use, includes:

(1) objectives to be addressed in the course; (2) learning activities designed to teach to objectives; (3) materials to be used by faculty and/or students; and (4) alternative instructional strategies for use in teaching to the objectives.

The curriculum packet is not a standardized module which all faculty must use in the same way. Rather the packet is to be used selectively as a resource for faculty and students as mainstream curriculum is integrated. A major effort is currently under way whereby Project staff and faculty use the packet in a team-teaching approach. It is intended that such a strategy will assist faculty in using the packet as a resource following Project completion when Project staff will no longer be available as resource persons.

Fundamentals of Development for Education (Sophomore Year)

While faculty teaching the development course did not request curriculum packets, they have collaborated extensively with Project staff in the identification of print and media resources related to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of children with handicapping conditions. Content has, as a result, been systematically integrated into all sections of the development course.

A second strategy for ensuring that future teachers are knowledgeable about the developmental characteristics of handicapped children has been the addition of practicum experiences which specifically focus on the identification of and interaction with handicapped children in public school and preschool settings.

Tutoring opportunities at both elementary and secondary levels have been available for several years for students in the development course.

With the current emphasis on preparing classroom teachers for mainstreaming, these practicum experiences have been specifically designed to provide students more structured opportunities to work directly with handicapped children. Although not all students elect to take advantage of this opportunity, increasing numbers are doing so each semester.

Seminars accompanying practicums have integrated content specifically related to the developmental characteristics and needs of handicapped children. In these seminars students identify the handicapped children they are having experiences with; discuss and share their observations and activities; analyze the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and characteristics of the children; and identify and discuss implications for teaching.

Equity Week: Secondary Methods (Junior Year)

Equity Week is a time set aside to specifically focus on equity issues and the implications of these issues for teachers. Equity Week has been held twice, once during the fall semester, 1980-81, and once during the spring semester. The week's activities were designed along the lines of a mini-conference such as may be found in a public school setting. The objectives for Equity Week were to have preservice teachers: (1) become more sensitive to their own values and feelings concerning educational equity issues; (2) demonstrate knowledge of the legal responsibilities of teachers in relationship to Title IX, Public Law 94-142, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and subsequent legislation and court decisions that affect teachers; (3) become aware of the several roles they must play when incorporating educational equity in their classrooms; and (4) become aware of the materials and resources available regarding educational equity and

begin thinking about how to incorporate these resources into daily and unit plans which can then be implemented in the classroom. A fifth objective, more long-range, asks preservice teachers to incorporate equity principles and knowledge into their teaching behaviors when working with students in their field setting classrooms.

Each day of Equity Week had a special focus. Monday was "awareness" day, and although secondary education faculty had preceded the week's activities by providing their students with equity information, the first day's activities were an attempt to have the students identify their own values and feelings concerning sex equity, exceptional children in the classroom, and multiculturalism.

Each of the following three days focused on an equity theme: the Tuesday focus was on sex equity, Wednesday covered multicultural aspects of equity, and Thursday dealt with students who were exceptional--gifted and handicapped. Each theme day included the following concepts: the legal implications for including equity in the classroom, the research, practice and status of equity practices in schools, and some specific hands-on skills and activities that teachers could use in their classrooms (e.g., collaborating in developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP), or identifying sex bias in textbooks and materials).

It should be noted that during Equity Week students were exposed to and interacted with a wide range of human resources from community and state agencies, the Nebraska Department of Education and administrators from the Lincoln Public Schools. Ethnic group representation included the Black, Indian and Mexican American communities. Special educators and co-equal education personnel from the University and State Department of Education participated.

The last day, Friday, was earmarked as a "Synthesis and Application" day. A multimedia program which synthesized bias in evaluation of pupils was followed by a panel of classroom teachers who interacted with the students in discussing how equity problems have interfaced with and changed their teaching, both pro and con. The program closed with students meeting with their respective content area professors to discuss and incorporate equity principles into their teaching field experiences. Secondary education faculty and staff participated in most of the activities during Equity Week and followed the week's activities by including equity practices when working with their students during the balance of the semester.

Two evaluation procedures were used in an attempt to determine the effectiveness of the Equity Week program. First, students were asked to respond to an activity and theme evaluation, as well as to make suggestions for improvements. The second evaluation procedure utilized was the development of instruments that would help in determining student knowledge and attitudes concerning equity issues and practices. These data were to be collected from students prior to and following Equity Week and at the end of the semester. Two instruments were developed, one attempting to measure student attitudes about equity issues and the second dealing with cognitive information retention.

Elementary Education

The Center for Curriculum and Instruction has developed a program which includes a sequence of learning activities designed to prepare the preservice elementary teacher to meet the needs of mainstreamed children. The first level, labeled the awareness level, occurs during the freshman/sophomore semesters. Students are made aware of the necessity to adapt curriculum and teaching strategies to the special needs of children with

handicaps. The student is required to observe a mainstreamed child and, as part of the report written about their pre-student teaching experiences, does a written analysis of the way this mainstreamed child is accommodated in the regular classroom.

The second level, the methodological level, occurs during the sophomore/junior/senior semesters when the student is enrolled in methods classes. In each methods class students are instructed in techniques to use in teaching that particular subject.

The third level, the application level, occurs when the senior is student teaching. During the curriculum seminar which accompanies student teaching, each student is required to write three papers. These papers address: (1) rationale and legislative mandates; (2) strategies for adapting curriculum to meet the needs of handicapped children; and (3) roles and relationships among classroom teacher, parents and support personnel. In addition, each student teacher is required to design a lesson or series of lessons to meet the needs of a mainstreamed child.

Elementary Education: Student Teaching

A synthesis of the mainstream curriculum is designed to occur during the process of student teaching. During that experience, the student teacher is supervised by a Teachers College supervisor who interacts with both that student teacher and with the cooperating teacher in whose classroom the student teacher has his or her practicum experience. After the basic components of the mainstream curriculum were operational in the respective teacher education courses, Project staff began collaboration during the winter of 1980 with faculty in the Department of Elementary Education (now a unit in the Center for Curriculum and Instruction) on the

question of how the Project might impact the quality of the student teaching experience in relation to the student teacher's work with handicapped students in the mainstreamed classroom. In keeping with the thrust of the Project, the intervention needed to focus on the development of appropriate faculty attitudes and skills, here specifically in relation to the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. Subsequent meetings involving the Chairman of the Department of Elementary Education, elementary education faculty, the principal of the local University-affiliated elementary school, and Project staff identified the need among supervising faculty in elementary education for role clarification concerning their supervision of student teachers who are working with handicapped students. In other words, what are the implications of mainstreaming for supervisory roles and relationships in the student teaching process? A decision was reached to develop an inservice education strategy which would in a collaborative framework focus on this professional need of supervising faculty.

The planning team, including representatives of the Department of Elementary Education, the Lincoln Public Schools, and the Mainstream Project, conceptualized a small conference utilizing two panels, each of which would include the following participants who function as a professional team in a particular elementary school: a building administrator, a cooperating teacher, a student teacher, a special education teacher, and a Teachers College supervisor. Each panel would describe the mainstream program operating in that particular elementary school, with an emphasis on an analysis of the processes, roles, and relationships contributing to the "success" of the program. Central issues such as program organization, IEP process, incorporation of the student teacher, collaboration during

implementation, curriculum delivery, and Teachers College supervisory roles would be discussed during the course of each panel's presentation and interaction. In order to enhance audience participation with the concurrently-scheduled panels, it was decided to limit attendance to the faculties of the two participating elementary schools and a limited number of student teachers in elementary education, in addition, of course, to the entire Elementary Education faculty.

The usefulness of this inservice strategy appears to relate to the following factors: (1) development of the Project-sponsored experience was based on professional needs identified by elementary education faculty themselves; (2) the medium was appropriate to the messages needing attention: the session encouraged Teachers College faculty and supervisory personnel in the local school system to talk about who does what and why in regard to mainstream-related supervision; (3) university faculty, public school staff, and student teachers had an opportunity to reality test current practice and explore possible modifications; (4) in sponsoring the session, the Project functioned as a change agent in assisting university and public school specialists in mainstreaming to collaborate; and (5) seen as a prototype, the format can be adjusted to fit ever-changing professional needs.

Educational Administration

Ensuring curriculum integration and program modification at the undergraduate level has been the major focus of the Dean's Grant. Recognizing, however, that building principals, superintendents and other administrators play a critical role in the successful mainstreaming of handicapped children, considerable activity has also occurred in the graduate

unit of Educational Administration. That unit has been represented on the faculty Task Force, has had ongoing formal and informal contact with Project staff, has worked with staff to identify curriculum which is integrated into appropriate courses, and has collaborated in the development of curriculum packets which are selectively used by faculty and students. These curriculum packets are similar in structure to those developed for the freshmen foundations course.

Section Three

MECHANISMS PLANNED OR OPERATIONAL FOR MAINTAINING, EVALUATING AND DOCUMENTING MAINSTREAM CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

As the Mainstream Project approaches the completion of its sixth and final year on May 31, 1981, the question of how to ensure the maintenance of the Mainstream Curriculum Integration Model without the services of Project staff has stimulated thinking and planning on the part of both staff and faculty. During March of 1981 the Mainstream Project Task Force, composed of both regular and special education Teachers College faculty members who have served as an internal advisory group since the first year of the Project, met to focus on key organizational and content issues relating to the maintenance, evaluation, and documentation of the integrated curriculum during the post-Project phase. With the Dean of Teachers College serving as chairperson and unit administrators also participating, Project staff and Task Force members identified issues and concerns to be addressed. This final meeting of the Task Force produced decisions concerning the organizational structure within Teachers College that will provide leadership and coordination of the integrated curriculum. Specifically, two committees have been formed.

An Equity Executive Committee, consisting of the Dean of Teachers College, the Director of Undergraduate Programs, the Director of Graduate Programs and the Chairman of the Department of Special Education, will be responsible for the administration of the mainstream curriculum integration program. Project staff will serve in technical assistance roles during the remainder of the Grant period.

Additionally, an Equity Advisory Committee, composed of the Equity Executive Committee plus one representative from each administrative unit, has been created to oversee the maintenance and monitoring of the integrated mainstream curriculum and generally to provide direction for the expansion of all aspects of equity-related curriculum. The Advisory Committee will designate ad hoc working groups to accomplish specific tasks as needed.

While the Executive and Advisory Committees will initially focus their activities and decisions on the maintenance of existing mainstream curriculum integration, a further objective is the expansion of curriculum integration into graduate programs in Teachers College as well as programs in related fields. Additionally, it is intended that the mainstream curriculum integration program will serve as a model for inclusion in Teachers College of curriculum related to other areas of equity such as multiculturism and sex equity. Individuals representing these equity areas will be added to the Advisory Committee as that task is addressed.

In April, 1981, at the initial meeting of the newly formed Equity Advisory Committee, a number of issues related to curriculum integration maintenance were identified. These issues are essentially those which have been addressed by Project staff and Task Force members during the six years of the Project and which, with the absence of Project funding and staff, must be newly resolved to fit the existing structure of Teachers College. Those issues which were identified as priorities for Advisory Committee resolution include: (1) materials/media location, dissemination and updating; (2) faculty performance in teaching mainstream curriculum; (3) program effectiveness as measured by student competence; (4) coordination of practicum and student teaching experiences with handicapped children;

(5) faculty orientation and inservice; and (6) annual review and documentation of mainstream curriculum integration processes and outcomes.

Section Four

EVALUATION PLAN TO MEASURE OCCURRENCE AND IMPACT OF CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

While many evaluation questions have been formulated and addressed during the planning, development and implementation phases of the Mainstream Curriculum Integration Model, the following five questions have been especially relevant to monitoring the effectiveness of the program: (1) To what extent are faculty teaching the identified curriculum in the designated courses?; (2) What measures of student competence are utilized to evaluate program effectiveness?; (3) Are students having student teaching and/or other practicum experiences with handicapped children?; (4) Is curriculum integration impacting positively on students' attitudes about mainstreaming?; and (5) What is the expressed confidence of students regarding their ability to teach handicapped children?

A self-report survey has been used to determine the extent to which faculty teach the identified curriculum. Faculty are asked to: (1) identify the mainstream curriculum (as designated by the course integration paradigm) which they have included in their courses; (2) indicate the level of presentation (i.e., content introduced, developed in more depth, and/or applied at the skill level to subject areas,; (3) report the approximate number of hours devoted to teaching mainstream curriculum; (4) describe the manner in which they have made use of Mainstream Project staff and material resources; and (5) relate their perception of the usefulness of curriculum packets which have been developed for use in some courses.

It is anticipated that faculty surveys will continue to occur periodically, although the instrument and procedures for reporting results will likely be modified in accordance with decisions by the Equity Advisory Committee. For example, discussions among members of this committee have resulted in the suggestion that review of course syllabi and periodic interviews with both faculty and students would strengthen the evaluation design.

Techniques used to determine student competence, as a measure of program effectiveness, have in part been identified by the Instructional Unit Outline in which faculty document specific approaches to student evaluation. Analysis of the IUOs has indicated that pre-post tests, inclusion of questions on regularly scheduled exams, and completion of papers/projects are common evaluation strategies.

While faculty self-report utilizing the IUO has been an appropriate mechanism for identifying student evaluation methods during the early stages of mainstream curriculum integration, it is anticipated that a more standardized method will be developed now that the curriculum integration model is more securely in place. As discussed in Section Three, this issue is one which will receive immediate attention by the Advisory Committee. The Committee is presently in the process of identifying points and/or courses during the four year program where student knowledge and skills might be more systematically assessed.

Teachers College students' practicum experience with handicapped children, their attitudes about mainstreaming, and their level of confidence in teaching the handicapped have been measured through use of a self-report survey completed each year by entering freshmen and graduating seniors. If

mainstream curriculum is being successfully integrated into courses and seminars as described, graduating seniors should: (1) report more direct experience with handicapped children; (2) have more positive attitudes about mainstreaming; and (3) report greater self-confidence in teaching handicapped children than freshmen who have not been exposed to the integrated curriculum.

In addition to comparing the responses of seniors and freshmen, comparisons are also made among seniors majoring in elementary education, secondary education, special education (dual majors in either elementary or seondary and special education) and music, art or physical education. Findings have also been compared across the three years of the survey in order to determine significant differences in responses as a result of longer exposure to the integrated curriculum.

Utilization of student surveys for measuring practicum experience, attitudes and confidence will likely continue in some form following Project completion. However, as with all monitoring and evaluation activities, the Advisory Committee, in collaboration with faculty and unit administrators, will be responsible for ongoing procedural modifications.